

Prevailing Prayer And Providential Provision

(Nehemiah 2:1-8)

- I. The Heaviness Of The Cup-barer (Vs. 1)
 - A. His Endurance Under The Lord (Vs. a-b)
 - B. The Endangering Of His Life (Vs. 1c-d)
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Prevailing Prayer + Providential Provision (Neh 2:1-8)

Some of the greatest writing on prayer is from a little known pastor in the 1800's named E. M. Bounds. I encourage every one to read his volume called Power thru Prayer. In one section of his book called the Essentials of Prayer, Bounds spoke of the Wonders of God accomplished thru prayer. He 1 The final out working of Neh 2:1-8 is nothing short of a miracle. The King of a nation was convinced to give his servant the means, money, material, and manpower to rebuild the city that once harbored his enemy. A miracle! Well I am convinced, that the same principles apply to our lives. 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212 213 214 215 216 217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247 248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 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B. The Endangering of His Life vs 1c+d
Nehemiah was the close guardian of the King. The latter part of verse one: Now I had... This was dangerous. A sad countenance would be seen as displeasure in the King and could mean death. That's why in vs 2 He was afraid when the King noticed! Endangering... Some times we must take chances and be held in our hands. Ester was hardened for her people. She purposed to come before the King unannounced. Beside with the words

II. The Heart of the King vs 2 I want you to remember, that although the exiles that returned to Jerusalem dragged feet in building, ultimately according to Ezra 4:21 Artaxerxes stopped the construction.

A. A Tender Heart vs 2 b+c - It is my conviction that this King was no different than any other King, self-centered narcissistic unconcerned with anyone but self. Nehemiah probably had good reason to fear. Yet in response to Nehemiah's prayer his heart was tender toward his servant. Just like Pharaoh's daughter whose heart was pierced by the cries of the baby Moses found in a basket, God accomplishes his will and his way among the heart of even sinful men.

B. A Turned Heart vs 2d - This King who probably had all of his needs met by servants around him, some to bring him his want of food, some to bring him his want of drink, of clothes, of entertainment,

1) He said: *The wonders of God's power are to be kept alive, made real and present, and repeated only by prayer. God is not now so evident in the world, so almighty in manifestation as of old, not because miracles have passed away, nor because God has ceased to work, but because prayer has been shorn of its simplicity, its majesty, and its power. Victory is to come at the end of praying.*

2) ...if we will get a burden for the ruined walls of our lives, homes, church, or nation, persistently call fervently upon God to act in these situations, God will providentially and miraculously act on our behalf. I want you to see some principals in this account. Notice first of all...

3) ...last night youth meeting. Tears shed, alters filled. I wonder if those same burdened soul's will tomorrow find that same heaviness in heart. That was the case with Nehemiah. Notice...

4) Psalms 27:14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

5) Esther 4:16 ...if I perish, I perish. I am convinced that the Christian burdened in prayer will be emboldened in pursuits.

6) To give Nehemiah what he wanted would be to overturn his own edict. But also remember Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

7) Like King Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:30 ...Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?

4) ...eight times in Nehemiah we find these short spontaneous prayers. Short prayers are just as effective as long ones. One author writes: "Praying for direction is a good habit to have if we prayed more before we spoke, we might make less mistakes."

1) ...how hopeless and desperate the solution to your prayer may be, God can turn the heart of the king. God can make away. No matter how powerful the temptation, no matter how distant and cold that loved one is God can turn their heart. I remember Bro. Tom Hayes recalling how God got a hold of his brother. Head first in a life of sin. Wanted to party one night, had no baby sitter. Took the baby to the party. During party, someone told his your baby's crying. He went to the baby, right then and there God smote that heart! God tenderized and turned that heart in answer to that family's prayer!

2) ...the elements of Nehemiah's cry...

3) ...application is how do we avail ourselves to the opportunities that God gives is in response to prayer. I remember one Sunday night my pastor preached a message called "Great and mighty things" Jer. 33:3 He challenged us to pick out some great and mighty thing and call out to God upon it's behalf and see if it does not come to pass. I prayed for a certain man to be saved at my work. That would be a great and mighty thing. Not to long after God opened the door wide open to witness to him and at that time I passed on the opportunity.

4) ...eight times in Nehemiah we find these short spontaneous prayers. Short prayers are just as effective as long ones. One author writes: "Praying for direction is a good habit to have. If we prayed more before we spoke, we might make less mistakes."

of wisdom, of judgment. But now in this one
gleaming moment, by a providential hand his
heart is turned toward Nehemiah. God not only
tenderizes the heart of the King but he turned the
heart of the King toward Nehemiah. No matter how hopeless

III. The Honesty of the Cupbearers Cry ^{V53+4}

The stage has been set the moment of truth
The providential opportunity. Note some of the

A. The Tact of His Language ^{V53b} Have
you ever heard someone say, "I'd like
to give them a piece of my mind" or "I'd
like to tell them a thing or two." So often that
gets us into trouble it can backfire. He didn't

say "You stopped the work in Jerusalem!" No this was not
a political problem it was personal. Tact. Don't tell ^{if you want Harry don't kick the line} ^{get right} ^{simply}

B. The Truth of His Love ^{V53c-g} - King
live forever! I love you I appreciate you
but my heart is broken over my home land.
My heart is broken over its broken condition.
John McCain has the Straight talk express. Well
Nehemiah is giving some straight direct yet
tactful talk. I guess the main application is how

C. The Trust in His Lord ^{V54c} - The Jew
dropping unimaginable happened. The King
asked the servant what do you want?
How can I meet your need? What was Nehemiah
reaction. He had had 4 months to think about
it. What was his reaction? I need this, this & this
No! So I prayed... A short prayer, eight times in

IV. The Help of the Kings Consent

I want to remind you of our title "Prevailing Prayer & Prerogative Provision". There is no doubt that this opportunity was an answer to prayer!

A. The Openness of the King - VS 4a+b So what do you want? He could have condemned Nehemiah by saying, "Is my homeland, my kingdom not good enough? Are you not satisfied to bask in the glory of my presence?" But instead of a fearful reprimand there was a favorable response, instead of death there was deliverance. Another author writes: "The heart that gives commands was in the hands of God."

B. The Obliging of the King - ^{VS 4-8} Nehemiah was way out on a limb. It taken wrong this request could be detrimental! Ancient writer Herodotus recorded the fact that people had been put to death both by Darius and Xerxes for showing reluctance to accompany their King. It was the King that gave orders not the servant yet in VS 8 The King grants! Completely Obliging to Nehemiah's request.
I am reminded of Eph 3:20-21

V. Closing - The walls of our lives, families, churches, community & nation lie in ruins. There are needs that God must prerogatively meet if the walls are to go up once again. These are out of the reach of our hands but even the King's heart is not out of God's hands.

- 1) Ephesians 3:20-21 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.